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**Vergil's Debt
to the
Hecuba and Troades of Euripides.**

The closest parallel that can be drawn between Vergil and the Greeks is not that between Vergil and Homer, but that between Vergil and Euripides. "C'est son esprit qu'il lui dérobe", says M. Patin, quoted by Glover. Vergil found in Euripides his own nature, his love of a life of study and retirement, and the society of a few intimate friends, his love of nature and country life, his wide human sympathy for the lowly and oppressed, his appreciation of the pathos of the toil and suffering of men and animals, his horror of war due to natural sensibility and to experience. Each had seen the misery which war brings, Euripides in the Peloponnesian War and Vergil in two civil wars. "If Euripides is the most tragic of Greek poets", says Glover, "there is more tragedy in the Aeneid than in all the rest of the Latin literature we know". Therefore there is none of the Homeric joy in battle in Vergil's Trojan War but only the lamentation of Euripides over the destruction of a great and beautiful city, the waste of heroic lives and the sorrow of captives.

Upon Euripides and Vergil alike press the questions, Are the gods just? Do they care for human suffering? Euripides in his cosmopolitan Athens, at a time when religious beliefs were being questioned, answers 'No'. The chorus of Trojan women cry (Troades 1077-1078)

*μέλει, μέλει μοι τάδ' εἰ φρονεῖς, ἄναξ,
οὐράνιον ἔδρανον ἐπιβεβώς.*

Hecuba in the depth of her anguish cries (Troades 1280-1281)

*ὦ θεοί. καὶ τί τοὺς θεοὺς καλῶ;
καὶ πρὶν γὰρ οὐκ ἤκουσαν ἀνακαλούμενοι,*
and again (1289-1290)

*πάτερ, ἀνάξια τῆς Δαρδάνου
γονᾶς τάδ' οἷα πάσχομεν δέδορκας;*
But the chorus answers (1291-1292)

*δέδορκεν, ἃ δὲ μεγαλόπολις
ἄπολις ὄλωλεν.*

Vergil, among the pious Romans in the age of Augustus who asked his help in strengthening the bonds of religious belief, feels that he can not understand the ways of Heaven and that mystery adds to the sadness of life. Dis aliter visum, he says (Aen. 2.428). So again in 1.603-605:

*Di tibi, si qua pios respectant numina, si quid
usquam iustitia est et mens sibi conscia recti,
praemia digna ferant.*

Yet he believes the gods do care. Dabit deus his quoque finem (1.199).

This difference in religious belief involves a difference in their treatment of fate. Euripides's fate is a blind force crushing the innocent Hecuba, Polyxena and Phaedra. In Vergil's eyes fate has a

beneficent aim with which mortals must ally themselves. Passion is a trivial thing compared with man's work and endurance for noble ends. Dido must suffer, but her sacrifice gives to the world the Roman state.

This conflict between human will and divine purposes is the theme of Greek tragedy. So in theme and character the fourth book of the Aeneid is related to Euripides's Medea and Hippolytus. With Medea and Phaedra before him Vergil drew his barbaric Eastern queen capable of tender devotion to a beloved and worthy object, but changing, when thwarted, to a raging fury. Professor Murray, in his introduction to his translation of The Medea, says that in these studies of oppression and revenge the writers dwell upon "the twofold evil of cruelty, that it not only causes pain to the victim, but actually by means of the pain makes him a worse man". The fury of Phaedra which slays Hippolytus and herself, the fury of Medea which slays four innocent victims, the fury of Dido which slays herself and brings Hannibal down on Rome, turns a loving woman into a black-hearted curse.

The second and third books of the Aeneid are written in the spirit and contain many of the incidents of the Trojan Women and the Hecuba. The latter opens with the story of Polydorus told by his spirit, who says that he, the youngest son of Priam, too young to bear arms, was sent by his father to Polymestor, king of Thrace, with whom his father had a friendship rendered sacred by the bonds of hospitality. As long as Troy survived, Polydorus was well treated by his host, but, when the city fell, for the sake of his gold, he was slain and thrown out upon the seashore. His spirit then visits his mother, who has been brought by the Greeks to Thrace, where all are detained by the shade of Achilles demanding the sacrifice of Polyxena. The third book of the Aeneid opens with the landing of Aeneas and his companions in Thrace, the horrible omen of the bloody thickets from which comes the voice of Polydorus and the same story of Polydorus, briefly told by Aeneas, who exclaims (3.56-57)

*Quid non mortalia pectora cogis,
auri sacra fames!*

In Euripides's story of Polydorus occur the lines referring to the death of Priam (Hecuba 23-24):
*αὐτὸς δὲ βωμῷ πρὸς θεομήτην πίνει
σφαγῆς Ἀχιλλέως παῖδος ἐκ μαιφόνου.*
There are two references to the same dreadful incident in the Troades. Compare first 16-17:

*πρὸς δὲ κρητῖδων βάθροις
πέπτωκε Πριάμος Ζηνὸς ἑρκείον θανάων.*

Later in 481-483 Hecuba appeals to it to prove herself the most wretched of women:

*καὶ τὸν φυτουργὸν Πριάμου οὐκ ἄλλων πάρα
κλύουσ' ἔκλαυσα, τοῖσδε δ' εἶδον ὀμμασιν*

αὐτὴ κατασφαγέντ' ἐφ' ἐρκείψ πυρρῷ,—

These references have been expanded by Vergil into the story of the murder of Polites by Pyrrhus at the altar in the palace at which Priam, Hecuba and their daughters had taken refuge, Priam's attack upon Pyrrhus and the murder of the weak old king.

A scene of the Hecuba represents the debate among the Greeks on the fate of Polyxena. Shall she be sacrificed to Achilles's demand? This suggestion Agamemnon opposed; the question hung in the balance until Ulysses persuaded the Greeks to slay her. This is the account given to Hecuba. Polyxena, remembering that she is a daughter of Priam, a sister of Hector and the destined bride of kings, prefers death to slavery and dies as a princess should. Vergil's Andromache in exile exclaims (3. 321-324):

O felix una ante alias Priameia virgo,
hostilem ad tumulum Troiae sub moenibus altis
iussa mori, quae sortitus non pertulit ullos
nec victoris eri tetigit captiva cubile!

Euripides has never a good word for Helen, who is regarded as the cause of all the suffering in both armies. Hecuba calls her (Troïades 132-137):

στρυγνὰν ἄλοχον, Κάστορι λῶβαν
τῷ τ' Εὐρώτῃ δυσκλείαν,
ἃ σφάζει μὲν
τὸν πεντήκοντ' ἄροτῆρα τέκνων
Πρίαμον, ἐμέ τε μελέαν Ἑκάβαν
ἐς τάνδ' ἐξώκειλ' ἄταν.

Helen should be slain and not Polyxena (Hecuba 265-266):

Ἑλένην νιν αἰτεῖν χρὴν τάφῳ προσφάγματα·
κείνη γὰρ ὤλεσέν νιν ἐς Τροίαν τ' ἄγει.
So again in Hecuba 441-443 we read:

ὥς
Ἑλένην ἴδοιμι· διὰ καλῶν γὰρ ὁμμάτων
αἰσχίστα Τροίαν εἶλε τὴν εἰδαίμονα.

Aeneas, on the night of the fall of Troy seeing her hiding in the temple, calls her (2.573):

Troiae et patriae communis Erinys.

The description of the fall of Troy in the last choral ode of the Hecuba corresponds closely to the story of the last night of the city in the second book of the Aeneid. In the first verses (905-906) the chorus sings

σὺ μὲν, ὦ πατρίς Ἰλιάς,
τῶν ἀπορθήτων πόλις οὐκέτι λέξῃ·

Aeneas in his narrative of that dreadful night exclaims (2.241-242)

O patria, o divum domus Ilium et incluta bello
moenia Dardanidum!

and (2.363)

Urbs antiqua ruit, multos dominata per annos.
Hecuba 910-911

ἀπὸ δὲ στεφάναν κέκαρ-
σαι πύργων

is paralleled in Aen. 2.290

ruit alto a culmine Troia.

Again, Hecuba 914-920

μεσονύκτιος ὠλλύμαν,
ἦμος ἐκ δειπνῶν ὕπνος ἦδ' οὖς ἐπ' ὅσοις
σκιδναται, μολπῶν δ' ἄπο καὶ χοροποιῶν
θυσιῶν καταλύσας
πόσις ἐν θαλάμοις ἔκει—
το, ξυστὸν δ' ἐπὶ πασσάλῳ,

is represented in Aeneid 2.248-249, 252-253, 265, 268-269:

Nos delubra deum miseri, quibus ultimus esset
ille dies, festa velamus fronde per urbem.

. . . . fusi per moenia Teucrī
conticuere; sopor fessos complectitur artus.

Invadunt urbem somno vinoque sepultam;

Tempus erat, quo prima quies mortalibus aegris
Incipit et dono divum gratissima serpit.

In Hecuba 921-922 the chorus laments

ναύταν οὐκέθ' ὄρων ὄμιλον Τροίαν
Ἰλιάδ' ἐμβεβῶτα.

In Aen. 2.254-256 Aeneas, in the same spirit, says,

Et iam Argiva phalanx instructis navibus ibat
a Tenedo tacitae per amica silentia lunae
litora nota petens . . .

The third stanza of the choral ode (Hecuba 928) brings the conflict into the city,

ἀνὰ δὲ κέλαδος ἔμολε πόλιν.

Aeneas describes it thus (2.298-301):

Diverso interea miscentur moenia luctu,
et magis atque magis, . . .
clarescunt sonitus, armorumque ingruit horror.

The women's first thought was to seek safety at the altars (Hecuba 934-936):

Δωρὶς ὥς κόρα,
σεμνὰν προσίζουσ' οὐκ
ἦνυσ' Ἀρτεμιν ἁ τλάμων·

Compare Aen. 2.515-517:

Hic Hecuba et natae nequiquam altaria circum,
praecipites atra ceu tempestate columbae,
condensae et divum amplexae simulacra sedebant.

But the altars did not protect them (Hecuba 937-941) with Aen. 2.762-763, 766-767: cf.

ἄγομαι δὲ . . .
τὸν ἐμὸν ἄλιον ἐπὶ πέλαγος,

ναῦς ἐκίνησεν πόδα καὶ μ' ἀπὸ γᾶς
ὤρισεν Ἰλιάδος·

Custodes lecti Phoenix et durus Ulixes
praedam adservabant; . . .

.pueri et pavidæ longo ordine mæres
stant circum.

The curse upon Helen in Hecuba 950-952 is the curse

of Aeneas when he sees her in the temple (Aen. 2. 577-578) :

ἂν μήτε πέλαιγος ἄλιον ἀπαγάγοι πάλιν,
μήτε πα—
τρῶν ἵκουτ' ἐς οἶκον.

Scilicet haec Spartam incolumis patriasque My-
cenas
aspiciet?

The story of the destruction of the city is contin-
ued in the Trojan Women, from which Vergil bor-
rowed more incidents and phrases. So Troades
18-19

πολὺς δὲ χρυσὸς Φρύγιά τε σκυλεύματα
πρὸς ναῦς Ἀχαιῶν πέμπεται.

has been elaborated by Vergil thus (Aen. 2.763-766) :

Huc undique Troia gaza
incensis erepta adytis, mensaeque deorum
crateresque auro solidi, captivaeque vestis
congeritur;

The character of Ulysses drawn by Hecuba in
Euripides is the character drawn by Sinon; cf. Tro-
ades 282-287,

μυσαρῶ δολίῳ λέλογχα φωτὶ δουλεύειν,
πολεμίῳ δίκας, παρανόμῳ δάκει,
ὅς πάντα τάκείθεν ἐνθάδε στρέφει, τὰ δ'
ἀντίπαλ' αἰθις ἐκέισε διπύχῃ γλώσσῃ
φίλα τὰ πρότερ' ἄφιλα τιθέμενος πάντων,

with Sinon's *invidia pellacis Ulixi* and *scelerum in-
ventor Ulixes* (Aen. 2.90, 164) and his story of
Ulysses's treachery and cold-blooded disregard of
truth and mercy, which, though false, seemed to the
Trojans quite in accord with the character of the
man whom they called *durus Ulixes* (Aen. 2.7).

H. MAY JOHNSON.

EASTERN HIGH SCHOOL, Washington, D. C.

(To be Concluded)

REVIEW

Roman Life and Manners under the Empire, by
Ludwig Friedländer. Authorized Translation of
the Seventh Enlarged and Revised Edition of
the Sittengeschichte Roms. Volume I by Leon-
ard A. Magnus; Volume II by J. H. Freese.
New York: E. P. Dutton and Co. (1908-1909).

Of the merits of Friedländer's *Sittengeschichte* it
is superfluous to speak at this late day; it is an in-
dispensable book of reference. One cannot but won-
der why the publisher asked the author in his seventh
edition to omit nearly all the references to the orig-
inal sources, which formed so valuable and important
a feature of the earlier editions. The result is that
the classical student cannot do without the sixth
edition, and that the seventh is suited rather to the
general reader; although one might fairly suppose
that even that enigmatical personage, to whose as-
sumed requirements so much is sacrificed now-a-

days, might occasionally like to be assured of the
existence of evidence for some statements which
must seem startling to one whose knowledge of
ancient Roman Life is not extensive.

A translation of the *Sittengeschichte* was certainly
desirable, although for the reason already given, an
accurate English version of the seventh edition
would be of little use to the serious student, unless
he had the sixth at his elbow.

Unhappily this translation cannot be called either
good or accurate. The first volume especially
abounds in examples of faulty and frequently unin-
telligible sentences, due in some cases to too literal
a rendering of the German, in others to misunder-
standing of the original, and in still others to bad
taste in the use of English. For example, on p. 2
we read, "most of the improvement of Rome was
on a generous scale, in public places and monu-
ments; but many regulations and widenings of the
chaotic streets (largely consequent on the ornamen-
tations) were also made". On p. 8 we are informed
that the Flavian Amphitheatre "bulks to heights
almost invisible to the eye", on p. 9 that "the ba-
silica was a market-building on columns". The doors
of advocates, it seems (p. 163), were "besieged by
parties", and "many small ones" (advocates,
namely!) were "too glad to devil four speeches for
a piece of gold"; but this is doubtless a misprint for
deliver.

On p. 229 we read that Soranus of Ephesus "ad-
vises the employment of Greeks, so that children
may learn the most beautiful of languages, and re-
ceive the utmost attention, lack of which so often
caused bow-leggedness", an effect of the neglect of
Greek which has been overlooked by its advocates
in modern times. Rome is said to have become
"one big tavern" (*taberna!*), and to be "one con-
tinual city of noise and bustle"; balconies were for-
bidden "because of their danger of fires"; the
"healthy" plain between Rome and the "Albanian"
Hills was "all built over with streets". The trans-
lator's negative compounds, such as 'unesteem', 'un-
employment', 'undescribable', 'indiscipline', his verb
to 'soothsay', and his nouns 'pushfulness', 'self-life'
(*Selbstleben!*), and 'superstitiousness', may perhaps
in some cases have been granted asylum in the hos-
pitable pages of the unabridged dictionaries, but
they might well be left there in company with 'river-
ine' and other dubious experiments in word-coinage.
'Little Asia' and 'Little-Asian', in spite of the ob-
vious convenience of the latter, somehow do not
commend themselves to the reviewer's perhaps too
Attic taste. For a masterpiece of a faulty sentence,
which is too long to quote here, see p. 12, near the
end.

But English is a difficult language, with many
traps even for the wary, and the critic is in danger
of being met with a *tu quoque*. Actual errors of